

[22 February, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

level of procurement and offtake of foodgrains. The per day carrying cost of surplus with reference to stocks as on 31st January, 2001 is Rs. 18 crores. The average per day cost of carrying surplus stock would be known after the close of the year and the accounts are finalized as the quantities vary on a daily basis.

New Foodgrains Policy

159. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a New Foodgrains Policy;

(b) if so, whether any step has been taken to store growing surplus as well as provide food to the poorest sections of the society;

(c) if so, whether Government have also favoured exemption of levy or any tax on the movement of foodgrains to check future increase in prices;

(d) if so, whether any concrete measure have been worked out in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. A High Level Committee to formulate a Long Term Grain Policy for the country has recently been constituted. The Terms of Reference of the said Committee include matters relating to Minimum Support Prices and price support operations, functioning of Public Distribution System, Policy regarding buffer stocks, Open Market Intervention and Export/Import, allocation of foodgrains for rural development programmes and other welfare programmes and FCI related issues, which also include the scope for reduction in the economic cost of foodgrains.

Government have decided to allocate wheat and rice at Rs. 2 per kg. and Rs. 3 per kg. respectively to the poorest of the poor under the recently launched Antodaya Scheme.

Revival of the Sugar Export Promotion Act

160. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to revive the Sugar Export Promotion Act;

(b) if so, whether under this Act, sugar mills in the country, *pro-rata* to their sugar production, shared the export loss;

(c) if so, whether this Act worked well till 1997;

(d) whether in this regard an ordinance was issued but could not be passed as a result thereof the Act could not come into force;

(e) whether Government have now decided to revive this Act in an improved form to boost exports; and

(f) if so, by when a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) to (f) The Sugar Export Promotion Act, 1958 has been repealed through an Ordinance dated 15.1.1997. Indian Sugar and General Industry Export/Import Corporation Ltd., has filed a writ petition No. 182/99 challenging its repeal in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. The matter is *sub-judice*.